

# **Proposal for Introducing Tablet PC Technology to facilitate CUC107 Northern Perspectives Internal Tutorials**

by

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## **1. Introduction**

### **Background**

The University was supplied with some 50 or 60 HP Tablet PCs in 2004 to be trialled in classrooms and used in IT research. After some teething problems in setting up the systems in 2004 they have now been used successfully in classrooms and the opportunity exists to extend their use into new classes.

### **Aim**

The aim of this project is to introduce the Tablet PC technology into the CUC107 tutorial classrooms as a way of enhancing students learning experience. A tutorial program will be developed which uses the Tablet PCs to access and utilize the web resources available as part of CUC107's online learning materials.

The aim would be to develop a 2 hour tutorial program for CUC107 based upon the delivery of 3 to 5 tutorial classes each week for CUC107 of fifty students each run by a tutor and supported by a group of support tutors (probably two). By using wireless technology through Tablet PC each student can personally access online resources to enhance discussion and extend interaction between the internal and external groups.

## **2. Description of Tablet PC and its application for learning**

The tablet PC technology allows for the introduction of the internet to each one of the students in a classroom setting and provides access to the unit resources at the students' desktop.

Students are able to browse the on-line resources for this unit, access wider resources on the web, contribute to online discussions and activities, access e-reserve readings and WP documents on their desktop. This will enable the tutorial activities to directly relate to the resources available on the web and with the tutor's guidance insure that internal students fully utilise these resources. By bringing internal and external students' experience of the unit in line, there will be a more seamless collaboration between them regardless of mode of study.

## **3. Teaching and Learning benefits**

The benefits of teaching and learning will be:

- a) A more consistent tutorial experience for students enrolled internally in CUC107.
- b) A richer learning experience for the students when they have access to web resources within the tutorial.
- c) A more consistent and interactive teaching program that utilises the resources available for the unit.
- d) A chance to mentor tutors into simultaneous face-to-face/online teaching.

## **4. Logistics**

Infrastructure requirements

- Dependent upon the approval by ITMS etc to set up a dedicated classroom for the delivery of Tablet PC classes.
- Will require access to the use of Tablet PCs and the CDU wireless network.
- Will need to explore issues of bandwidth and ability to use the required number of tablet PCs at one time.

#### Timetabling

- Will substantially reduce the teaching time required for running CUC107 from, for example: 15 internal tutes to 5 internal tutes based upon numbers in CUC107 in Semester Two 2005.

#### Staffing

- There is the potential for some staff cost savings in the long term by implementation of this tutorial program. It is possible that the program will require less casual staff employment and encourage more involvement by permanent and contract staff.

#### Training

- A training program would need to be established to assist tutors to become familiar with technology and applications used in the tutorial program.

#### Testing

- A pilot program in Semester One 2006 would enable the testing of the system, hardware and software before implementing the program more fully in Semester Two 2006.

#### Risks and Risk management

- The risk involved in the development of the program is considerable in that the involvement of technology in teaching is still inherently risky in terms of technological breakdowns. However the running of the classes can be managed easily without the technology if necessary and a contingency plan will be put in place.
- Students' experience of learning in the tutorials relies heavily on good facilitation and support by the tutor to insure students participate, stay on track, communicate effectively and don't become lost in the technology at the expense of engaging fully with the content. For most tutors running a class that combines tutorial discussion and activities with technology is a new experience and because it involves orchestrating a range of activities at once it takes some skill. Thus special training workshops will be conducted for tutors and mentoring as they put the skills into practice.
- There is also the chance that either the dedicated room for Tablet PC teaching or the hardware may not be suitable. Preparation of this plan over the course of Semester Two and a pilot scheme in Semester One 2005, should enable us to identify potential problems well before they are experienced by the large groups of students. If the pilot program in Semester One 2006 doesn't proceed as successfully as it might be expected, then we continue to implement the current tutorial program in Semester Two, with or without a pilot program to iron out potential bugs.

## 5. Timeline

Implementation will be carried out in a three stage process.

### **Stage One - Semester Two 2005:**

- Establishing the infrastructure and ensuring the hardware available will meet the needs of the class group.
- Development of a plan for tutorial delivery.

### **Stage Two - Semester One 2006:**

- Conduct a pilot teaching program with one (ordinary) tutorial group during.
- Conduct training workshops for all CUC107 tutors.

### **Stage Three - Semester Two 2006:**

- Implementation of the program across all tutorial groups if technology is functional and pilot program reports indicate it to be worthwhile.